[Marine Local ACA]

Beliefs and Customs - Folk Stuff 19

JUN 19 [?]

Arnold Manoff MARINE LOCAL ACA

(Union Hall of the Marine Local. Rain outside. Men sitting around gloomily, some playing cards, contract bridge. Everybody seems gloomy today)

Hey Ben. What's that you're whistling? Sing it out. It's classical. You wouldn't know the difference if I told you. Hey Goebbels. C'mon. We need a fourth. C'mon, C'mon. Ta de da da de da ——————— C'mon willya Goebbels —————— What am I whistling?

Me? How the hell should I know? I don't go in for that classical stuff. Here's Goebbels. Deal em out. Nu Mr. Goebbels. How is Mr. Hitler?

He is varee big steenk Mister Spencer.

Hey Tony. You're smart. Oogatza! Tsvatchee! Tell me what I'm whistling.

Oogatz in your eye! I don know from nothin. All I know is one thing. I want the dirtiest, crummiest freighter out of New York. Christ! When it rains I get so doddam restless. I'd take any friggin job just to get out. I'm so friggin restless, I don't know what I'm doin half the time. Look at the rain boys. Just look at the rain. Ouch! Oogatza! Ben. Oogatz. See! Like this. Oogatz! Oogatz! With the motions!

I bid one no troomp. Hey Haskell. What am I whistling? Tell me.

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In the shade of the old apple tree. I pass. It all sounds the same to me. Everything I hear is in the shade of the old apple tree.

All right. You're such a wise guy, Ben. I know what you're whistling. I bid a spade. It's that thing what they call scherazadee.

Scherezadee huh? Scheherazade, you mug. Rimsky-Korsifoff!

Yeh. O.K. O.K.

Pass.

Dot dash dash dot dash dot dot ——————

That's the SS Beatrice. KFSU.

Shut if off. I can't hear myself.

O.K. Play out Ben. Play out.

Turn on some music, willya. I cant stand to hear the boys workin. Makes me restless.

Listen to Tony. What's the matter Tony?

Hey. Cigarette me. Thanks. Buy you carton after my first million.

Play. Play. Look he's murdering all his troomp.

Now what am I whistling?

There's Barney's.

Barney's! Calling all men to Barney's. 177th St. and Bronx Park! The only store of its kind in America, thank God!

You better whistle Ben. You're better off whistling than as a comedian.

3

If I had my fiddle, I'd show you something.

Yeh, I used to fly a kite. Where's your fiddle Ben?

In the Bronx in the upper deck of the closet. The moths play on it every Spring. Tell me what I'm whistling. Then you'll know what the moths play on the fiddle.

I used to fly a kite. So what? Now I'm an operator.

Troomp! Yeh. My mother baked bread. If I ate it now, I'd hate it. I used to love it. Still I think I would love it again. But I'm fooling myself. Play. Play.

You wanna know what I'm whistling?

All right. Tell us. We're dyin to know. Honest Ben. We're dyin to know.

You're set one, my lads.

No Post Mortems.

Asa's Death, my lads, Asa's Death. Ever hear of it?

Hey Ben. How'd you like a job reading tombstones for a living?

Who's keeping score?

Nobody.

Why doesn't somebody keep score?

What for?

Deal! Deal!

During prohibition I coulda made a fortune. But I was too much of a law abiding citizen. I coulda worked on a rum runner, 75 a week and a bonus.

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Listen to Tony. Hey Tony. Cut it out!

Deal. Deal. I shall biddink a grent slem, rawthaw, I hope.

Hey Ben. Whaddya think of this new crap they're tryin to put over on us? Makin us officers, by god! Whaddya think of it?

There's a quaint colloquial expression used in the Eastern part of the Bronx. It's said that whenever the bosses wanna give somethin away, don't take it or you'll get it in the arse.

Deal. Deal.

I'm tired of this. Give me the table. I'm gonna set up the bug. Hey Tony c'mon. I'll send. You take the mill. I'll bet you're so stale you can't take 30 a minute.

Oh you think so! All right set it up. Give him the table. The hell with the cards. Go on Ben set it up so we can see how lousy you are. I can take your sending any day, get up and put out a fire around the corner, keep it in my head, come back and still be waiting for ya.

Tony, Tony.

Set it up. Set it up.

(Ben takes the bridge table and sets up the telegraphers sending instrument on it. He sits down at the key and Tony sits down at the typewriter next to him. The instrument is for practise purposes. A small amplifyier is attached to it. Ben takes one ear phone and Tony takes the other. The other operators gather around. Ben takes the New York Times to copy from and warms up a few times stroking the sending key and getting the feel of it. Just as he gets set, one of the boys comes up from behind and pulls a red hair out of his already half bald head.)

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"You son of a bitch! What the hell do you think I am? Cut it out. I never get sore but that's one thing I can't stand. Not that I mind losing it but it hurts.

O.K. Ben I'm ready.

O.K.

dat datata dat dat datta ta datat dat datderadatderatdatdat
_____

Use your other foot Ben.

Some sending Ben.

The bug is moving around. I can't get the feel of it. Give me a Cootie and I'll show you some speed. O.K. Tony.

Yeh I'm way ahead of ya.

Then why aint ya putting it down?

Go on. Send. I got it all in my head.

Library of Congress

Hey Red. Sit down and give us some high and fancy sendin.

No me. I just had six beers.

Go on Ben.

dat dararat dat dat derat deratat dat

_____ _____ __

Well Tony?

Go On I got it in my head?

Hey Ben, give him three dots, four dots, two dots, dash.

That's what I just gave him. Here's somethin else. Put on the other can so you can hear it twice. Dat derarat derat ——————————————

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Hey! Cut it out Ben. Will ya?

You got that in your head?

Lemme take that bug, Ben. I feel hot.

Who's got a Cootie around here I'll show ya some speed.

Think ya can do forty a minute.

Give me five nights out. I'll send and take anything.

Sit down Haskell. Tony'll take whatever ya got. He keeps it all in his head.

That's the way it ought to be on the freighters. Eight or nine guys waiting around to relieve each other.

Go on Haskell.

Wait'll I get warmed up.

Give him a whiskey to warm him up.

Don't. He's liable to send opt his hidden inhibitions.

O.K. C'mon Haskell.

Dat darat ——————————————————————————————————-

That's it Haskell!

Faster! C'mon!

I can't go faster.

It aint his bug.

What the hell is a comma!

A bunch of alleged operators! What's a comma!

Da Da Deda Da Da

Thanks.

Hey Tony what's a matter. What are you keepin it all in your head for? Type it out.

7

Library of Congress

Not bad Haskell.

Well, a little Japanese in it never hurts.

Jeez Christ! I'm not used to the bug.

I admit somethin aint right!

You know Tony. You're so full of crap sometimes! Why don't you say you can't do it and you need practise?

I could copy that guy all day without making a mistake. Red and I used to sit up here pounding it for hours. I'd walk over for a drink, keep it in my head and come back and still be way ahead of him.

Yeh!

Hey! For Chrissakes! The table is swaying. I can't send with the bug moving around.

Why not! Sea conditions.

That's right. Make believe you're on the ship!

Hey open the window!

Whew! Get that Harbor breeze. Go one Red! Give him some effects.

Bad weather boys!

The English Channel Boys! The hardest friggin conditions!

Pound it Haskell! I'm swaying the table.

Hey look at Tony. He's sliding all over the place. He's got a <u>way</u> with that mill!

Boy! This ship sure can jump!

Pound it Haskell!

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Get the breeze boys!

I'm seasick already!

Pound it. Pound it! Atta Boy Haskell.

Get hot!

That's it Tony. Now you're takin!

Rat ter rat rat terat tat ter rat eratarat ————————————

What a ship! What a ship!

Tat ter rat ter rat ter rat ter terat ———————————————-

Sway that table, Red!

Open the other window! That's it!

SS Beach Maru broadcasting!

The friggin Beach Maru!

Now he's hot!

Look at Tony. He thinks he's on the English Channel!

SS Beach Maru!

Yeh!

Yeh!

Tat ter rat ter rat rat terat tertarat tat tat tat
_____ _____ _____

Crash!

Yow! We've been torpedoed!

The goddamn table caved in!

Hey Tony get off the floor. You're in port!

O.K.

All over. All over!

Pick up the typewriter!

O.K. O.K.

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All over, all over.

Yeh. But I got warned up all right!

Ya sure did brother!

O.K. Close the windows. The papers are ripping off the bulletin board.

O.K. All over. Compose yourselves lads.

Let's start the meeting.

Got a quorum?

Yeh.

O.K. Let's start the meeting. I'm still a radio operator, anyway.

Get up there Ben. Start the meeting.

Everybody, c'mon! Practise is over for the day!

So ordered!

Shoot! What's your beef?